



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Canyon National Park

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Grand Canyon News Release

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Fire Managers Are Making Plans for the Range Prescribed Fire on the North Rim of Grand Canyon National Park

Grand Canyon, Ariz. – Grand Canyon National Park fire managers are making plans to initiate the Range Prescribed Fire (Range Rx) on the North Rim of the park within the next few weeks, weather permitting.

The Range Rx Unit is located due north of the North Rim developed area in between the Range Road (the w1a) and Highway 67. It is 2,340 acres in size, and consists primarily of first-entry, mixed conifer forest.

Cool, moist conditions have led fire managers to choose a phased approach to ignition of the Range Rx, working their way from north to south within the unit and focusing ignitions on heavy dead and down fuels and sunny ridge tops. Hand ignitions will be used and are expected to be conducted over the course of several days. It is likely that only part of the Range Rx will be completed at this time.

Prescribed fires play an important role in decreasing risks to life, resources, and property by reducing accumulations of forest fuels and maintaining the natural role of fire in a fire-adapted ecosystem. Additionally, this prescribed fire will aid in protection objectives such as decreasing the risk of extreme fire behavior along Highway 67, the North Rim's primary egress route.

Like all prescribed fires, the plans for the Range Rx contain a set of parameters which define (among other things) the expected weather and fuel conditions under which the fire can be initiated. Prior to implementing the burn, fire managers will evaluate current conditions and will only ignite the fire if the prescribed conditions are within those parameters.

The Arizona Trail and the Range Road are currently expected to remain open throughout the prescribed fire. Hikers should be prepared to make minor detours as directed by fire crews.

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Smoke from the fire is expected to be visible from Highway 67 on the North Rim and from most South Rim viewpoints. During the day, smoke typically disperses to the northeast. At night, smoke will most likely settle into North Rim drainages and flow down into the canyon as temperatures cool, slowly rising back out during the day as temperatures warm. Coordination with the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality is currently underway.

For more on the Range Rx, please contact Grand Canyon Public Affairs Specialist Shannan Marcak at 928-638-7958. To learn more about fire management in Grand Canyon National Park, visit the park's web site at <http://www.nps.gov/grca/parkmgmt/firemanagement.htm>.

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